SOME NEW BOOKS.

Capt. Mahan's "Life of Nelson."

No book by an American citizen has ever been welcomed in England with such eagerness, we may even say with such enthusiasm, as the work on *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, by Capt. A. T. MAHAN of the United States navy. The work of which we speak procured for its author the degree of D. C. L. from Oxford and that of LL. D. from the English University of Cambridge. One can easily understand the feelings which prompted such recognition. Not only was the book in itself worthy of high commendation in respect of research, of thought, and of style, but it appealed with peculiar force to a country whose influence on history since the campaigns of Marlborough has been due mainly to its power upon the ocean. It is not, however, wholly out of gratitude to his English admirers that Capt. Mahan has now given to the world a new *Life of Nelson* (Little, Brown & Co.), but rather because the naval hero, inseparably associated with the battles of Cape St. Vincent, of the Nile, of Copenhagen, and of Trafalgar, may be considered the embodiment of the sea power of Great Britain. The author recognizes in his preface that the life of Nelson has been written so often, from Southey's venture down to our own times, that an explanation, almost an apology, seems due for any renewal of the attempt. Aside, however, from the attractiveness of the theme in itself, Capt. Mahan deems it essential to the rounding off of his own discussion of the influence of sea power that he should present a study, from his own point of view, of the one man who in himself summed up and incarnated the greatest of the possibilities which sea power comprehends; the man for whom genius and opportunity worked together to make him the personification of the navy of Great Britain, which had been the dominant factor in the periods treated in the author's previous work.

The method followed by the author in this study has been to make a careful examination of Nelson's voluminous correspondence, analyzing it, in order to detect the leading features of temperament, traits of thought and motives of action; and thence to conceive within himself, by gradual familiarity even more than by formal effort, the character therein revealed. The impression thus produced he has sought to convey to others, partly in the form of ordinary narrative and partly by such groupings of incidents and utterances, not always or even nearly simultaneous, as may serve, by their joint evidence, to emphasize particular traits or particular opinions more forcibly than when such testimony is scattered far apart, as it would be if recounted in a strict order of time. A like mode of treatment has been pursued in regard to that purely external part of Nelson's career in which is embraced his military action as well as his public and private life. The same aim is kept in view of showing clearly not only what he did, but the principles which dominated his military thought and guided his military action throughout his life; or it may be such changes as must inevitably occur in the development of a man who truly lives. Again, it is pointed out that this cannot be done satisfactorily without concentrating the evidence from time to time, and such concentration is, therefore, a duty owed by a writer to his readers, if they wish such acquaintance with his subject as he thinks he has succeeded in acquiring for himself. In the present relatively brief notice of two volumes, each of which comprises several hundred pages, we must confine ourselves to a glance at the earlier incidents of Nelson's career, and then dwell mainly on his services in the battle of Cape St. Vincent, in the battle of the Nile, in the battle of Copenhagen, and in his final battle at Trafalgar. At the same time, we cannot entirely pass over Nelson's relations with Lady Hamilton, seeing that, as Capt. Mahan reminds us, they profoundly affected the life of the Admiral.

I.

It is not to be expected that we should have of the first thirty years of Nelson's life any such minute records as those which illustrate the comparatively brief but striking period of his active fighting career, from 1793 to 1805, when he at once rose to prominence and established intimate relations with numbers of his contemporaries. Only a few anecdotes, more or less characteristic, have been preserved concerning his boyhood and youth. The external details of the uneventful first thirty years of the life of Horatio Nelson are rapidly summarized by the author of these volumes. He was born on Sept. 29, 1758, the fifth son and sixth child of Edmund Nelson, then rector of the parish of Burnham Thorpe, in Norfolk, a county which, it will be remembered, lies along the eastern coast of England bordering the North Sea. His mother, whose name before marriage was Catherine Suckling, was grandniece to Sir Robert Walpole, the well-known Prime Minister of Great Britain during twenty years of the reigns of the first two Georges. Sir Robert's second brother was called Horatio, and it was from the latter or his son that the future hero took his baptismal name, which, in a more common form, was also that of Sir Robert's younger son, the celebrated writer of letters and memoirs, Horace Walpole. Of the eleven children borne by Nelson's mother only two lived to grow old. She herself died at 42, and her brother was also cut off in the prime of his life. As the earlier Nelsons were unusually long-lived, Capt. Mahan suggests that a certain delicacy of constitution may have been transmitted through the Sucklings to the generation to which the Admiral belonged. He was himself at various periods through life a great sufferer, and frequently an invalid. Allusions to illness, often of a most prostrating type, and to his susceptibility to the influences of climate or weather, occur repeatedly and at brief intervals throughout his correspondence. This is considered by our author a factor in Nelson's career which should not be overlooked; for, on the one hand, it explains in part the fretfulness which at times appears; and, on the other, brings out with increased force the general kindly sweetness of his temper, which breathed, with slight abatements, through such distressing conditions. It enhances, at the same time, the strength of purpose that almost unconsciously trod bodily weakness under foot at the call of duty or of honor.

We are told that the immediate occasion of his going to sea was as follows: In 1770 the Falkland Islands, a desolate and then unimportant group lying in the South Atlantic to the eastward of Patagonia, were claimed as a possession by both Spain and Great Britain. The latter had upon them a settlement called Port Edmond, before which, in the year named, an overwhelming Spanish squadron suddenly appeared and compelled the British occupants to lower their flag. Peremptory demands for reparation were forthwith despatched to Spain and a number of English ships of war were ordered at once into commission. Among these was the Raisonnable of sixty-four guns, to the command of which was appointed Nelson's uncle, Capt. Maurice Suckling. The latter had some time before promised to provide for one of his sister's children, the Nelson family being very poor; and the custom of the day permitting naval Captains, as a kind of patronage, to take into the King's service on board their own ships a certain number of lads as midshipmen or otherwise, the opportunity of giving a nephew a start in life was now in his hands. The story is that Horatio, though then but 12 years old, realized the burden of pecuniary care that his father was carrying and himself volunteered the wish that his uncle would take him to sea. However it happened, the suggestion staggered Suckling, who was not ignorant of the lad's puny frame and fragile constitution. "What has poor little Horatio done," cried he, "that he, being so weak, should be sent to rough it at sea? But let him come and, if a cannon ball takes off his head, he will at least be provided for."

Thus began Nelson's career at sea. But we cannot dwell on the successive steps of his promotion from service in a West India merchantman to Acting Lieutenant in the Channel fleet, Lieutenant in the Lowestoffe, and to Commander and Post-Captain. Before, however, we mark his personal appearance at the age of 22 and 24, as described by the author, we should pause to recall two anecdotes relating to his childhood, which, as Capt. Mahan points out, are in entire keeping not merely with particular traits, but with the ruling tenor of his life. It seems that Horatio Nelson and his elder brother were going to school one winter day upon their ponies. Finding the snow so deep as to delay them seriously, they went back, and the elder reported that they could not go on. The father replied: "If that be so, I have, of course, nothing to say; but I wish you to try again, and I leave it to your honor not to turn back unless necessary." On the second attempt, the elder boy was more than once for returning, but Horatio stuck it out, repeating continually: "Remember, it was left to our honor," and the difficult journey was accomplished. The author reminds us that the children, in this instance, seem to have felt that there was danger in going on. The other recorded occurrence shows in the lad that indifference to personal benefit, as distinguished from the sense of conspicuous achievement, which was ever a prominent characteristic of the man. The master of the school had a fine pear tree, whose fruit the boys coveted, but upon which none dared hazard an attempt. At last Nelson, who did not share their desires, undertook the risk, climbed the tree by night, and carried off the pears, but refused to eat any of them, saying that he had taken them only because the others were afraid. Capt. Mahan's comment on these incidents is that, though they may seem trivial, they are so really because they belong to the day of small things. To those accustomed to watch children they will not appear unworthy of note. Taken together, they illustrate as forcibly as do his greatest deeds the two forms assumed at various times by the one incentive which always most powerfully determined Nelson's actions through life, the motive to which an appeal was never made in vain. No material considerations, neither danger on the one hand nor gain on the other, ever affected him as did that idealized conception which presented itself, now as duty, now as honor, according as it bore, for the moment, upon his relations to the State or to his own personality. "In my mind's eye," said he to his friend, Capt. Hardy, who bent over him as his spirit was parting amid the tumult of his last victory, "I ever saw a radiant orb suspended which beckoned me onward to renown." Nelson did not often verge upon the poetical in words, but to the poetry of lofty aspiration his being always throbbed responsive.

II.

The turning point in Nelson's career seems to have been his transfer in 1782 to Hood's fleet in the harbor of New York. There is, in Capt. Mahan's judgment, a direct connection of cause and effect between this transfer and the battle of Cape St. Vincent in 1797, when Nelson emerged from merely professional distinction to national renown, standing head and shoulders above all competitors. In the four days that followed his arrival in New York Nelson took the tide at the flood and was borne on to fortune. Yet, according to our author, in this, as in many another instantaneous and fortunate decision, we should not see the mere casting of a die, the chance result of an irreflective impulse. In Capt. Mahan's opinion, the determination to change into Hood's squadron, with its powerful, far-reaching effect upon his future, was in necessary logical sequence to the young officer's whole habit of thought, and wish, and previous preparation. He was swept into the current that carried him on to fame by the irresistible tendency of his own conscious will and cherished purpose. Opportunity flitted by; he was ready and grasped it. We are reminded that at this point, when Nelson was 24 years old, the diligence of his principal biographers has secured for us a description of the young Captain's personal appearance and of the impression produced by his manner upon an interested acquaintance, who afterward became a warm friend and admirer, as well as a frequent correspondent. The narrator, then Prince William Henry, afterward King William IV., gave the following account, apparently at some period between 1805, when Nelson fell, and 1809, when the first edition of Clarke and McArthur's Life appeared: "I was then a midshipman on board the Harfleur [Lord Hood's flagship], lying in the Narrows off Staten Island, and had the watch on deck when Capt. Nelson of the Albemarle came in his barge alongside, who appeared to be the merest boy of a Captain I ever beheld; and his dress was worthy of attention. He had on a full-laced uniform; his lank, unpowdered hair was tied in a stiff Hessian tail of extraordinary length; the old-fashioned flaps of his waistcoat added to the general quaintness of his figure and produced an appearance which particularly attracted my notice, for I have never seen anything like it before, nor could I imagine who he was nor what he came about. My doubts were, however, removed when Lord Hood introduced me to him. There was something irresistibly pleasing in his address and conversation; and an enthusiasm when speaking on professional subjects that showed he was no common being." The author mentions that the Countess of Minto, in her "Life of Lord Minto," speaks of Nelson's "shock head" at the time, twelve years later (1794), when he was a frequent visitor at the house of Minto, then Sir Gilbert Elliott, and Viceroy of Corsica; a trivial detail, but confirmatory, so far, of the picture drawn by the Prince. The latter continued: "Nelson, after this, went with us to the West Indies and served under Lord Hood's flag during his indefatigable cruise off Cape François. I found him warmly attached to my father [King George III.], and singularly humane. He had the honor of the King's service and the independence of the British navy particularly at heart, and his mind glowed with this idea as much when he was simply Captain of the Albemarle and had obtained none of the honors of his country as when he was afterward decorated with so much well-earned distinction." We should here reproduce another reference to Nelson's exterior at this time, or rather a little earlier, which possesses the interest of mentioning explicitly the charm of manner which was one of his best birth gifts, reflecting, as it did, the generous and kindly temper of his heart. We are told by his first biographers, Clarke and McArthur, that the personal appearance of Capt. Nelson at this period of his life (from the age of 22 to 24), owing to his delicate health and diminutive figure, was far from disclosing the greatness of his intellectual powers. "From his earliest years, like Cleomenes, the hero of Sparta, he had been enamored of glory and had possessed a greatness of mind. Nelson preserved also a similar temperance and simplicity of manner. Nature, as Plutarch further remarks of the noble Spartan, had given a spur to his mind which rendered him impetuous in the pursuit of whatever he deemed honorable. The demeanor of this extraordinary young man was entirely that of a British seaman. When the energies of his mind were not called forth by some object of duty or professional interest, he seemed to retire within himself and to care but little for the refined courtesies of polished life." We are told, however, that "in his dress he had all the cleanliness of an Englishman, though his manner of wearing it gave him an air of negligence, and yet his general address and conversation, when he wished to please, possessed a charm that was irresistible."

III.

We pass to the battle of Cape St. Vincent, which first revealed to his countrymen Nelson's pre-eminent ability. Concerning the incident which decided the issue of this engagement the commanding Admiral, Sir John Jervis, reported that "Commodore Nelson, who was in the rear on the starboard tack, took the lead on the larboard and contributed very much to the fortune of the day." Our author's comment is that on the intellectual side, the side of skill, this is, in truth, what Nelson did; but that on the side of valor it is to be noted that he did it for the moment single-handed. The Culloden, the actual leader, came up shortly, followed afterward by the Blenheim, and the Excellent was ordered by Jervis to imitate Nelson's movement and strengthen the operation which he had initiated. It was the concentration of these ships at the point which Nelson seized, and, for a moment, held alone, that decided the day; and it was there that the fruits of victory were chiefly reached. Capt. Mahan, however, would not have us understand that all the honors of the day are to be claimed for Nelson, even conjointly with those present with him at the crucial moment. Much was done, both before and after, which contributed materially to the aggregate results, some of which were missed by the very reluctance of men of solid military qualities to desist from seeking enemies still valid, in order to enjoy what Nelson calls the "parade of taking possession of beaten enemies." Our author deems it probable that more Spanish ships might have been secured at Cape St. Vincent had it not been for the eagerness of some British vessels to push on to new combats. But, while fully allowing for the merits of many others, from the Commander-in-Chief down, he pronounces it true of St. Vincent, as of most battles, that there was a particular moment on which success or failure hinged, and that upon the action then taken depended the chief outcome; a decisive moment, in short. That moment was when the enemy attempted, with a fair prospect of success, to effect the junction which Nelson foiled. As Collingwood afterward summed up the matter: "The highest rewards are due to you and Culloden. You formed the plan of attack; we were only accessories to the Dons' ruin. For, had they got on the other tack, they would have been soon conjoined and the business would have been less complete."

Nelson's account of the proceedings of his ship, the Captain, in the battle of Cape St. Vincent, on Feb. 14, 1797, having been published not long afterward, apparently by his authority, was challenged as incorrect by Vice-Admiral William Parker, commanding the van, whose flag was on board the third British ship, the Prince George. Parker claimed that the latter, with the Blenheim and the Orion, had been much closer to the Captain and Culloden than was implied in Nelson's narrative. Our author considers Nelson's account a simple if somewhat exultant description of the facts as they passed under his observation; except in the statement to which Parker objected, his assertions do not, even inferentially, carry an imputation upon any one else. Nevertheless, while Capt. Mahan concedes that the love of glory is among the most potent and elevating of military motives, and that in no breast has it burned with a purer flame than in that of Nelson, he nevertheless suggests that it is better for officers to leave the public telling of their own exploits to others, and he deems it evident that Nelson, when taken to task, realized, uncomfortably, that he had not exercised due thoughtfulness. Before dropping the subject, Capt. Mahan thinks it right to say that Nelson had held from the first that Collingwood, Troubridge, and himself were the only ones "who made great exertions on that glorious day; the others did their duty, and some not exactly to my satisfaction." "Sir John Jervis," he continued, "is not quite contented, but says nothing publicly." He then quotes an anecdote, which, if he had it from Jervis, confirms his own opinion about the support given. "Calder, the Chief of Staff, said, 'Sir, the Captain and Culloden are separated from the fleet and unsupported; shall we recall them?' 'I will not,' said Jervis, 'have them recalled. I put my faith in those ships; it is a disgrace that they are not supported and are separated.'" In his public letter Jervis refrained alike from praise and from blame. He mentioned but one name, that of Calder, as bearer of despatches, and only incidentally said that he had been useful to him at all times. In a private letter to the First Lord of the Admiralty he was more explicit, yet scarcely adequately so. He named Troubridge, Nelson, and Collingwood, but expressed himself as "confident that, had those who were least in action been in the situation of the fortunate few, their conduct would not have been less meritorious." Another anecdote of Jervis, however, shows the importance which was really conceded by him to Nelson's action. It is characteristic of one who valued beyond most traits in an officer the willingness to assume responsibility. "The test of a man's courage," Jervis used to say, "is responsibility." In the evening following the battle, while talking over the events of the day, Calder, it seems, spoke of Nelson's wearing out of the line as an unauthorized departure from the method of attack prescribed by the Admiral. "It certainly was so," replied Jervis, "and if ever you commit such a breach of your orders I will forgive you also." Success covers many faults, yet, in Capt. Mahan's opinion, it is difficult to believe that, even had Nelson been overwhelmed in the execution of his unauthorized manœuvre at Cape St. Vincent, the soundness of his judgment and his resolution would not equally have had the applause of a man who had just fought twenty-seven ships with fifteen, because "a victory was essential to England at that moment." The author of this book submits that the justification of departure from orders lies not in success, but in the conditions of the case; and Jervis was not one to overlook these, nor, thereafter, to forget that only one man in his fleet had both seen the thing to do and dared the responsibility of doing it.

IV.

For his part in the battle of Cape St. Vincent Nelson had been simply made a Knight of the Bath. His next opportunity for distinction was to come at the battle of the Nile. This momentous engagement is discussed by Capt. Mahan in great detail, and he does not hesitate to pronounce it the most nearly complete and the most decisive ever gained by a British fleet. Nevertheless, it was rewarded in the person of the commanding officer with honors less than those bestowed for St. Vincent and Camperdown. Nelson was merely advanced to the lowest rank of the peerage, as Baron Nelson of the Nile. "In congratulating your Lordship on this high distinction," wrote the First Lord of the Admiralty, "I have particular pleasure in remarking that it is the highest honor that has ever been conferred upon an officer of your standing in the service, and who was not a commander-in-chief; and the addition [of the Nile] to the title is meant more especially to mark the occasion on which it is granted, which, however, without any such precaution, is certainly of a nature never to be forgotten." To the sharp criticism made in the House of Commons on the smallness of the recognition, the Prime Minister replied that Nelson's glory did not depend upon the rank to which he might be raised in the peerage, a truism too palpable and inapplicable for serious utterance, the question before the House being not the measure of Nelson's glory, but that of the national acknowledgment. As Hood justly said: "All remuneration should be proportionate to the service done to the public;" and, if that proportion cannot always be attained absolutely, without exhausting the powers of the State, there should, at least, be some proportion between the rewards extended to individuals and the particular services. Nelson made, we are told, to the First Lord's letter a reply that was dignified, and yet measured, to a degree unusual for him, contrasting singularly with his vehement reclamation for others after Copenhagen. Without, however, the semblance of complaint, he allowed plainly to appear between the lines his own sense that the reward was not proportionate to the service done. Whatever, nevertheless, was defective in the formal recognition of his own Government was abundantly supplied by the tributes which flowed from other quarters, so various that his own phrase, "the whole world," is scarcely an exaggeration to apply to them. The Czar, the Sultan, the kings of Sardinia and of the two Sicilies sent messages of congratulation and rich presents, the Czar accompanying his with an autograph letter. The houses of Parliament voted their thanks and a pension of £2,000 a year. The East India Company acknowledged the security gained for their Indian possessions by a gift of £10,000, one-fifth of which Nelson, with his wonted generosity, divided at once among his father and family, most of whom were not in prosperous circumstances. Other corporations took appropriate notice of the great event, instances so far apart as the cities of London and Palermo and the island of Zante showing how widespread was the sense of relief. Not least gratifying to him must have been the numerous letters of congratulation he received from friends in and out of the service. The three great Admirals, Lord Howe, Lord Hood, and Lord St. Vincent, the leaders of the navy in rank and distinction, wrote to him in the strongest terms of admiration. The two last styled the battle of the Nile the greatest achievement that history could produce, while Howe's language, if more measured, was so only because it was more precise in characterizing the special merits of the action, and was, therefore, acknowledged by Nelson with particular expressions of pleasure. Capt. Mahan adds that the scar left by the wound received at the battle of the Nile seems to have been the cause of Nelson's hair being trained down upon his forehead during the later years of his life. Before that it was brushed well off and up, as may be seen in the portrait by Abbott, painted during his stay in England, while recovering from the loss of his arm at Teneriffe. After his death at Trafalgar, a young officer of the Victory, who had cut off some locks for those who wished such a remembrance of their friend, speaks of "the hair that used to hang over his forehead, near the wound that he received at the battle of the Nile."

V.

It is well known that, at the battle of Copenhagen, Nelson refused to see the signal of recall. Capt. Mahan discusses at some length this incident which, in its superficial aspect, represents Nelson as the mere fighting man, who, like a plucky dog, could not be dragged off his antagonist. Of late years doubt has been cast over the reality of Nelson's disobedience, for the reason that Otway carried a verbal message from Sir Hyde Parker, the Admiral in command, to the effect that the order of recall was to be understood as permissive, leaving Nelson the liberty to obey or not. Otway's biography itself, however, as the author of this book points out, shows that the signal had been hoisted before he reached Nelson's ship. Parker's secretary, Mr. Scott, has also stated distinctly that "it was arranged between the Admirals that, should it appear that the ships which were engaged were suffering too severely, the signal for retreat should be made to give Lord Nelson the option of retiring if he saw fit." On the other hand, it seems clear to Capt. Mahan that Nelson's own impressions did not agree with Scott's. Not only did he say some hours after the fight, "Well, I have fought contrary to orders, and I shall perhaps be hanged; never mind, let them," but his account of the matter to Lord Minto is not consistent with any distinct understanding on his part that he had perfect liberty of action. Nearly a year later, in March, 1802, Minto writes: "Lord Nelson explained to me a little on Saturday last the sort of blame which had been imputed to Sir Hyde Parker for Copenhagen; in the first place, for not commanding the attack in person, and in the next place for making signals to recall the fleet during the action; everything would have been lost if these signals had been obeyed." The author submits that, if Nelson understood that the signal was to be construed as permissive only, it was extremely ungenerous and most unlike Nelson to have withheld an explanation which extenuated, if it did not excuse, one of the most dangerous and ill-judged orders that ever was conveyed by flag. It is further pronounced improbable that Parker, had the understanding been explicit, would not have insisted with the Admiralty upon the fact when he was smarting under the general censure which had led to talk of an inquiry. It also seems unlikely that Nelson, having such a contingency in view, would have failed to give distinct instructions that his ships should not withdraw unless he repeated the signal; nor is it easy to reconcile the agitation observed in the fleet by Stewart with a previous arrangement of the kind asserted. Our author thinks that what Parker said, if he said anything, was probably one of those by-remarks with which an apprehensive man consoles himself that he reserves a chance to change his mind. Such provision rarely entered Nelson's head when embarking upon an enterprise in which "do or die" was the only order for success. The man who went into the Copenhagen fight with an eye upon withdrawing from the action would have been beaten before he began. In Capt. Mahan's opinion, it is upon the clear perception of this truth and his tenacious grip of it that the vast merit of Nelson in this incident depends, and not upon the specific act of disobedience; although never was disobedience more justified, more imperative, more glorious. To retire with crippled ships and mangled crews through difficult channels under the guns of a half-beaten foe, who would renew his strength when he saw the movement, would have been to court destruction, to convert probable victory into certain and perhaps overwhelming disaster. It was not, however, only in superiority of judgment or of fighting qualities that Nelson in this one act towered like a giant above his ranking officer; it was in that supreme moral characteristic which enabled him to shut his eyes to the perils and doubts surrounding the only path by which he could achieve success and save his command from a defeat verging on annihilation. In the pantomime of putting the glass to his blind eye, Capt. Mahan sees a profound allegory. There is, he says, a time to be blind, as well as a time to see. If in it there was a bit of conscious drama, it was one of those touches that not only provoke the plaudits of the spectators, but stir and raise their hearts, giving them both an example of heroic steadfastness and also the assurance that there is one standing by upon whom their confidence can repose to the bitter end, no small thing in the hour of hard and doubtful battle. It had its counterpart in the rebuke addressed by him on this very occasion to a Lieutenant who uttered some desponding words on the same quarterdeck: "At such a moment, the delivery of a desponding opinion unasked was highly reprehensible, and deserved much more censure than Capt. Foley gave you."

The author holds that having regard to the general political condition, and especially to the great combination of the North, at the time directed against Great Britain, the victory of Copenhagen was second in importance to none that Nelson ever gained; while, in the firmness of the resistance and in the attendant difficulties to be overcome, the battle itself was the most critical of all in which he was engaged. So conspicuous were the energy and sagacity shown by him that, in the author's opinion, most professional seamen will echo the words of Admiral Jurien de la Gravière: "They [Nelson's energy and sagacity] will always be in the eyes of seamen his fairest title to glory. He alone was capable of displaying such boldness and perseverance. He alone could confront the immense difficulties of that enterprise and overcome them." Notwithstanding this, and notwithstanding that the valor of the squadron, as manifested in its losses, was never excelled, no medals were ever issued for the battle of Copenhagen, nor were any individual rewards bestowed, except upon Nelson himself, who was advanced in the peerage to be a viscount, and upon his immediate second, Rear Admiral Graves, who was made a Knight of the Bath. The cause for this action—it was not a case of oversight—has never been explained; nor did Nelson consider the reason for it which the Prime Minister advanced to him in a private interview at all satisfactory. If it was because a formal state of war did not exist between Great Britain and Denmark, the obvious reply of those engaged would be that they had hazarded their lives and won an exceptionally hard-fought fight in obedience to the orders of their Government. If, on the other hand, the Ministry felt the difficulty of making an invidious distinction between ships engaged and those not engaged, as between Nelson's detachment and the main body under Parker, it can only be said that this was shirking the duty of a Government to reward the deserving for fear lest those who had been less fortunate should cry out. The previous Administration had not hesitated to draw a line between those engaged and those not engaged at the battle of the Nile, even though so great an officer as Troubridge was thereby left on the wrong side. Lord St. Vincent (Jervis), however, had shrunk, it will be remembered, from distinguishing Nelson even by name at the battle which had won for himself his title. This suggests to Capt. Mahan the speculation whether the joint presence of St. Vincent and Troubridge at the Admiralty may not have been the cause of the failure to give adequate official recognition to the victory of Copenhagen.

VI.

The last chapter of the second volume is devoted to the naval operations which took place on Oct. 19-21, 1805, and culminated in the transcendent victory of Trafalgar. Here we must follow the author's narrative in more detail. It was on the 19th of October, in the year just named, that the combined fleets of France and Spain put to sea with the fixed purpose of daring the hazard of battle. They numbered thirty-three ships of the line—eighteen French and fifteen Spanish—and were accompanied by five frigates and two brigs, all of which were French. This great force in its aggregate was one. There were not two separate entities of a French fleet, and a Spanish fleet acting in concert, as is often the case in alliances. Whatever were the administrative arrangements, for cruising and for battles. The vessels of the two nations were blended in a single mass, at the head of which was the French Admiral, just as the general direction of the naval campaign was in the hands of the French Emperor alone. The commander-in-chief was Vice-Admiral Villeneuve, the same that Nelson had pursued to the West Indies and back to Europe. The commander of the Spanish contingent, Vice-Admiral Gravina, was less his colleague than his subordinate. There were also flying in the combined fleet the flags of four junior Admirals, two French and two Spanish, and the broad pennants of several Commodores. In the allied force there were four three-decked ships of from 100 to 130 guns, all Spanish, of which one, the Santissima Trinidad, was the largest vessel then afloat. Among Nelson's twenty-seven there were seven three-deckers of 98 to 100 guns, but, in the lower rates, the British were at a disadvantage, having but one 80-gun ship and three sixty-fours, whereas the allies had six of the former and only one of the latter. All the other vessels of the line of battle were seventy-fours, the normal medium type, upon which the experience of most navies of that day had fixed as best fitted for the general purposes of fleet warfare.

The movement of the allies noticed on Oct. 19th was communicated to Nelson at half-past nine in the morning. According to his announced plan, to cut the enemy off from the Mediterranean, he at once made signals for a general chase to the southeast, and the British fleet moved off in that direction with a light southerly wind. At noon, Nelson sat down in his cabin to begin his last letter to the possessor of his heart, Lady Hamilton. The words then written he signed as though conscious that no opportunity to continue might offer; the following day, however, he added a few lines in which the dominant note was fear that the enemy might again elude him by returning into port; an apprehension that expelled the previous haunting sense of finality. There he laid down the pen, never again to address her directly. The letter thus abruptly closed by death was found open and unsigned upon his desk after the battle: "My dearest beloved Emma, the dear friend of my bosom: The signal has been made that the enemy's combined fleet are coming out of port. We have very little wind, so that I have no hope of seeing them before to-morrow. May the God of battles crown my endeavors with success; at all events, I will take care that my name shall ever be most dear to you and Horatia, both of whom I love as much as my own life. And, as my last writing before the battle will be to you, so I hope in God that I shall live to finish my letter after the battle. May heaven bless you, prays your Nelson and Bronte." He wrote the same day to his daughter by Lady Hamilton, addressing the letter to Miss Horatia Nelson Thompson, by which name she had hitherto been known. In the codicil to his will, signed on the morning of the 21st, a few hours before the battle, he called her, as we shall see, his adopted daughter, and desired that she would, in future, use the name of Nelson only. The letter ran thus: "My Dearest Angel: I was made happy by the pleasure of receiving your letter of Sept. 19, and I rejoice to hear that you are so very good a girl and love my dear Lady Hamilton, who most dearly loves you. Give her a kiss for me. The combined fleets of the enemy are now reported to be coming out of Cadiz; therefore I answer your letter, my dearest Horatia, to mark to you that you are ever uppermost in my thoughts. I shall be sure of your prayers for my safety, conquest, and speedy return to dear Merton and our dearest good Lady Hamilton. Be a good girl; mind what Miss Connor says to you. Receive, my dearest Horatia, the affectionate parental blessing of your father, Nelson and Bronte."

The main bodies of the contending fleets did not come in sight of each other during the 20th, and it was not until the morning of the 21st that the British fleet was descried heading to the northward and that of the allies to the southward, the latter being ten or twelve miles east of their opponent. In the far distance Cape Trafalgar, from which the battle takes its name, was just visible against the eastern skies. At twenty minutes before 7 Nelson made in quick succession the signal to "Form the order of sailing," which, by his previous instructions, was to be the order of battle, and to "Prepare for battle." Ten minutes later followed the command to "Bear up," Nelson's ship, the Victory, setting the example by at once altering her course for the enemy. Collingwood did the same, and the ships of the two divisions fell into the wake of their leaders as best they could, for the light wind afforded neither the means nor the time for refinements in manœuvring. Fourteen ships followed the Royal Sovereign, which bore Collingwood's flag, while the remaining twelve gathered in Nelson's division behind the Victory. The two columns steered east, about a mile apart, that of Nelson being to the northward, from which circumstance, the wind being west-northwest, it has been called, commonly, the weather line. When the development of the British movement was recognized by Villeneuve, he saw that fighting was inevitable, and, wishing to keep Cadiz, then twenty miles to the northward and eastward, under his lee, he ordered the combined fleets to wear together. The scanty wind, which embarrassed the British, impeded this manœuvre also, so that it was not completed till near 10 o'clock. Nelson, however, noted its beginning at 7, and with grave concern, for not only would it put the allies nearer their port, as it was intended to do, but it would cause vessels crippled in the action to find to leeward of them, during the gale which he foresaw, the dangerous shoals off Trafalgar, instead of the open refuge of the Straits. The appreciation of the peril thus entailed led him to make a signal for all the ships to be prepared to anchor after the battle, for it was not to be hoped that the spars of many of them would be in a condition to bear sail. The result of the movement of the allies was to invert their order. Their ships, which had been steering south, now all headed north. The van became the rear; Gravina, who had been leading the column, was in the rear ship, and it was upon this rear, but still the southern flank of the hostile array, that the weight of Collingwood's attack was to fall, whereas Nelson was to strike the Bucentaure, Villeneuve's flagship, a little north of the middle of the allied columns.

VII.

We are told that, soon after daylight on the 21st, Nelson, who, according to his custom, was already up and dressed, had gone on deck. He wore, as usual, his Admiral's frock coat, on the left breast of which were fixed the stars of four different orders. It was noticed that he did not wear his sword at Trafalgar, although it lay ready for him on the cabin table; it is supposed he forgot to call for it, as this is the only instance in which he was known not to carry it when engaged. At about 6 o'clock he summoned Capt. Blackwood on board the Victory to give him final and precise instructions for the conduct of the frigates during and after the battle. Blackwood found him in good but very calm spirits, preoccupied with the movement of the allies and the probable results of his own plan of attack. He frequently asked, "What would you consider a victory?" Blackwood answered: "Considering the handsome way in which the battle is offered by the enemy, their apparent determination for a fair trial of strength and the proximity of the land, I think, if fourteen ships are captured, it will be a glorious result." Nelson's constant reply was that he would not be satisfied with anything short of twenty. He admitted, however, that the nearness of the land might make it difficult to preserve the prizes, and he was emphatic in directing that, if the shattered enemies had any chance of returning to Cadis, the frigates were to be employed actively in destroying them, and were not to be diverted from that aim in order to save either ships or men. Annihilation, he repeated, was his aim, and nothing short of it, and he doubtless regretted the absence of six ships of the line which had been despatched to the Mediterranean on convoy service. Nelson availed himself of Blackwood's presence to have him, together with Hardy, witness his signature to a paper in which he bequeathed Lady Hamilton and the child Horatia to the care of the nation, and which, consequently, has been styled a codicil to his will. The place and hour of the writing are fixed by the words, "in sight of the combined fleets of France and Spain, distant about ten miles." In this codicil Nelson first recounted, briefly but specifically, "the eminent services of Emma Hamilton" to the State on two occasions, as believed by himself to have been rendered. Into the actuality of these services Capt. Mahan does not deem it needful to inquire. He thinks it sufficient to say that Nelson's knowledge of them could not have been gained at first hand, and that the credence he unquestionably gave to them must have depended upon the evidence of others, probably of Lady Hamilton herself, in whom he felt and always expressed the most unbounded confidence. "Could I have rewarded these services," the paper concludes, "I would not now call upon my country. But, as that has not been in my power, I leave Emma, Lady Hamilton, a legacy to my King and country, that they will give her an ample position to maintain her rank in life. I also leave to the beneficence of my country my adopted daughter, Horatia Nelson Thompson, and I desire she will use in future the name of Nelson only. These are the only favors I ask of my King and country at this moment when I am going to fight their battle. May God bless my King and country and all those whom I hold dear. My relations it is needless to mention; they will, of course, be amply provided for."

The Victory did not come under fire until 12:30 o'clock; toward 11 Nelson went below to the cabin. Shortly afterward the signal lieutenant, who had been by his side all the morning, followed him, partly to make an official report, partly to prefer a personal request. Entering the cabin, he paused at the threshold, for Nelson was on his knees, writing. The words, the last that he ever penned, were written in the private diary which he habitually kept, and in which were noted observations and reflections upon passing occurrences, mingled with occasional self-communings. These followed on without break of space or paragraph upon the last incident recorded, and they ran thus: "May the great God whom I worship grant to my country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory, and may no misconduct in any one tarnish it, and may humanity after a victory be the predominant feature in the British fleet. For myself, individually, I commit my life to Him who made me, and may His blessing light upon my endeavors for serving my country faithfully. To Him I resign myself and the just cause which it is intrusted to me to defend. Amen. Amen. Amen."

Going on deck, Nelson said to Blackwood, who was still awaiting his final instructions, "I will now amuse the fleet with a signal." After musing awhile, he said: "Suppose we telegraph, 'Nelson confides that every man will do his duty.'" The officer to whom the remark was made suggested "England" instead of "Nelson." Capt. Mahan says that, to the fleet, it could have made no difference. To them the two names meant the same thing; but Nelson accepted the change with delight. "Mr. Pasco," he called to the signal officer, "I wish to say to the fleet, 'England confides that every man will do his duty.'" He added, "You must be quick, for I have one more signal to make, which is for close action." Pasco answered, "If your Lordship will permit me to substitute 'expects' for 'confides' it will be sooner completed. Because 'expects' is in the vocabulary and 'confides' must be spelt." Nelson, apparently satisfied, replied hastily, "That will do, Pasco; make it directly." But Capt. Mahan points out that the slightly mandatory "expects" is less representative of the author of the renowned sentence than the cordial and sympathetic "confides."

It is well known that Nelson was mortally wounded by a sharpshooter on the French ship Redoubtable about twenty-five minutes past 1. Fifteen minutes after the Victory and Redoubtable came together, as Nelson and Hardy were walking forward and had nearly reached the usual place of turning, Nelson, who was on Hardy's left, suddenly faced about. Hardy, after taking a step further, turned also and saw the Admiral in the act of falling on his knees with his left hand touching the deck; then, the arm giving way, he fell on his left side. To Hardy's exclamation that he hoped he was not badly hurt, he replied: "They have done for me at last," and when the expression of hope was repeated he said again: "Yes, my backbone is shot through." "I felt it break my back," he told the surgeon a few minutes later. The ball had struck him on the left shoulder, on the forward part of the epaulette, piercing the lung, where it severed a large artery, and then passed through the spine from left to right, lodging finally in the muscles of the back. Although there was more than one mortal injury, the immediate and merciful cause of his speedy death was the internal bleeding from the artery. The stricken hero was at once carried below, he himself covering his face and the decorations of his coat with his handkerchief, that the sight of their loss might not affect the ship's company at this critical instant. The cockpit was already cumbered with the wounded and dying, but, the handkerchief falling from his face, the surgeon recognized him and came at once to him. "You can do nothing for me, Beatty," he said. "I have but a short time to live." A short examination convinced the surgeon that there was, indeed, no hope. "Doctor, I am gone," he said to the Rev. Mr. Scott, the chaplain, who knelt beside him, and then added in a low voice, "I have to leave Lady Hamilton and my adopted daughter, Horatia, as the legacy to my country." Hardy, the Captain of the Victory, who had been with Nelson since the day of St. Vincent, hurried to the cockpit as soon as he was at liberty to quit the deck. "Well, Hardy," said Nelson, "how goes the battle? How goes the day with us?" "Very well, my Lord," replied Hardy. "We have got twelve or fourteen of the enemy's ships in our possession." The exact number proved to be eighteen. "That is well," said Nelson, "but," he added, "I bargained for twenty. I hope," he continued, "none of *our* ships have struck, Hardy." "No, my Lord," was the answer, "there is no fear of that." Nelson then said, "I am a dead man, Hardy. I am going fast; it will be all over with me soon. Come nearer to me. Pray let my dear Lady Hamilton have my hair and all other things belonging to me." An hour later, when Hardy returned to the cockpit, Nelson said, "Don't throw me overboard; you know what to do." Hardy having given assurance that his wishes should be attended to, Nelson then said: "Take care of my dear Lady Hamilton, Hardy; take care of poor Lady Hamilton. Kiss me, Hardy." The Captain knelt down and kissed his cheeks. "Now I am satisfied. Thank God, I have done my duty." These last words he repeated at intervals as long as the power of speech remained. To quote the rugged words of the Victory's log: "Partial firing continued until 4:30, when, a victory having been reported to the Right Honorable Lord Viscount Nelson, K. B., he died of his wound."

VIII.

The concluding paragraph of this noble biography runs as follows: "There, at Trafalgar, surrounded by the companions of his triumph and by the trophies of his prowess, we leave our hero with his glory. Sharer of our mortal weaknesses, he has bequeathed to us a type of single-minded self-devotion that can never perish. As his funeral anthem proclaimed, while a nation mourned, his body is buried in peace, but his name liveth forevermore. Wars may cease, but the need for heroism shall not depart from the earth while man remains man and evil exists to be redressed. Wherever danger has to be faced, or duty to be done at cost to self, men will draw inspiration from the name and deeds of Nelson. Happy," continues the author, "happy he who lives to finish all his task. The words 'I have done my duty' sealed the closed book of Nelson's story with a truth broader and deeper than he himself could suspect. His duty was done, and its fruit perfected. Other men have died in the hour of victory, but for no other has victory so singular and so signal graced the fulfilment and ending of a great life's work. '*Finis coronat opus*' has of no man been more true than of Nelson. There were, indeed, consequences momentous and stupendous yet to flow from the decisive supremacy of Great Britain's sea power, the establishment of which, beyond all question or competition, was Nelson's great achievement; but his part was done when Trafalgar was fought. The coincidence of his death with the moment of completed success has impressed upon that superb battle a stamp of finality, an immortality of fame which even its own grandeur scarcely could have assured. He needed, and he left, no successor. To use again St. Vincent's words, 'There is but one Nelson.'"

Let us recur now, for a moment, to the beginning of the first chapter of the first volume, which is as worthy of being reproduced as the admirable paragraph just quoted. "It is," thus the narrative opens, "the appointed lot of some of history's chosen few to come upon the scene at the moment when a great tendency is nearing its crisis and culmination. Specially gifted with qualities needed to realize the fulness of its possibilities, they so identify themselves with it by their deeds that they thenceforth personify to the world the movement which brought them forth, and of which their own achievements are at once the climax and the most dazzling illustration. Fewer still, but happiest of all, viewed from the standpoint of fame, are those whose departure is as well timed as their appearance, who do not survive the instant of perfected success, who do not linger on, subjected to the searching tests of common life, but pass from our ken in a blaze of glory which thenceforth forever encircles their name. In that evening light break away and vanish the ominous clouds wherewith human frailties or tyrant passions had threatened to darken their renown; and their sun goes down with a lustre which the lapse of time is powerless to dim. Such," Capt. Mahan points out, "was the privilege of the stainless Wolfe; such, beyond all others, was that of Nelson. Rarely has a man been more favored in the hour of his appearance; never one so fortunate in the moment of his death." M. W. H.

THE KING OF SWEDEN'S BOOK.

A Historical Romance About His Grandmother, the Wife of Bernadotte.

The King of Sweden has written a book, but his loyal subjects don't mind it so much as they might be expected to, because he had written other books before, and they were in a measure prepared for eccentricities of this nature. Besides, the situation isn't half so bad as it might be, for the other books were poetry, while the present volume is prose, and a historical novel at that. Although belonging to a sleep-inviting order of literature, it is a monument to the romantic and poetical tendencies of the royal author, being about his grandmother.

That grandmother, as every one knows, was the Désirée Clary who was betrothed to but didn't marry Napoleon Bonaparte, and did marry Bernadotte, one of Napoleon's Marshals, who afterward became King of Sweden. Sweden is not a little proud of having had for Queen a woman who is reputed to have turned up her nose at the future Emperor of France, who really subdued him who was destined to conquer Europe. So a great deal is written about her there, much of it with the idea of demonstrating that current history is all wrong about her in details which may seem highly unimportant to the rest of the world, but are held to be highly important there. About ten years ago, when the flood of Napoleonic literature first began to be let loose upon a helpless world, the Court Chamberlain—you see, it's the fashion to be literary at the Swedish court—brought out a book about her in which he backed up everything he said about her by the most respectable and unimpeachable of documents. The book did not have the success outside of Sweden that the inhabitants thought it was entitled to. So the heavy historical style of the Court Chamberlain having failed, King Oscar II. determined to wake up the world with his own airy poetical fancies. That is the history of the book.

The facts stated are all warranted. There are preserved in Sweden an immense number of documents relating to Bernadotte, his wife, and their times, and King Oscar had free access to them all. Some of the letters and papers quoted and referred to in his book have never been published before. The book is a biography of his grandmother in the form of a novel. It is held to throw new light on the relations of Bernadotte and Napoleon, and helps to explain how the former was able to defy the latter without coming to grief or meeting the fate of most of the French leaders who opposed Napoleon's projects actively. In addition to having his documents, King Oscar was able to give personal reminiscences of his grandmother. This is the way he repeats her account of her betrothal with Napoleon. Joseph Bonaparte, who afterward married her sister Julie; Napoleon, Julie, and she were all together one day. While they were chatting, Napoleon said:

"The only happy marriages are where the husband and the wife are complementary. You, Joseph, are accommodating, as is Désirée, while Julie and I must have our own way. You do well, therefore, to marry Julie, while as for Désirée, she shall be my wife."

Then he took her upon his knee and they were betrothed. They were not to be married until she was 16. Napoleon went to Paris and in 1795 Désirée broke her engagement because he was paying court to a rich heiress, Mlle. Montausier, who was 17 and had fine eyes and a dowry of 1,200,000 francs. Désirée acted with great reluctance, and wrote to Napoleon that he had rendered her unhappy for life. Her letters afford evidence that she never entirely forgot her first love, and her jealousy and dislike of Josephine broke out occasionally after a lapse of fifty years. After her marriage to Bernadotte, Napoleon showed his friendly feelings toward her and she remained intimate with the Bonaparte family, and, according to King Oscar, was able not only to protect her husband from Napoleon's resentment, but also to aid in his advancement.

There is one obscure point in Mme. Bernadotte's history which the King does not see fit to clear up, supposing him to have been able to do so. That is why she left her husband and son in Sweden and returned to Paris alone. This separation lasted twelve years, during which period she lived in Paris under the name of the Countess of Gothland. Whatever the reason, her correspondence relating to this period has been destroyed. Her presence in Paris caused endless gossip and conjecture. The evil-tongued Barras said that affairs of the heart detained her there. The Duc de Richelieu said of her: "She is a Swedish spy, whom her august husband has set to watch me, just as he did under the Imperial Government, when he used his little wife to good advantage in his personal intrigues, while the Bonapartes on their side were thinking that she was the instrument of their family." Nevertheless she remained in France for five years after her husband had been crowned King of Sweden, and after rejoining him she lived in apparent happiness with him for twenty years until his death in 1844. She herself did not die until 1860.

ARBITRATION AND WAR.

Brief But Not Uninteresting Discourse by the Old Soldier.

"You know I can't get over the fact," said the old soldier, "that there's a heap more heroes in the world than there was, all due to the civil war. And you can't tell where you're going to meet 'em. The man you buy a lead pencil of in the stationery store may have served, and so may the man you buy your clothes of in the clothing store. Just as likely as not the man that brings your milk in the morning, coming along early through the quiet streets, may have been at Gettysburg; and the man that twists the gripwheel of the cable car you ride down Broadway in may have marched over narrow corduroy roads, through lofty forests, with a gun over his shoulder and a knapsack on his back.

"You see, you can't tell. The man in the pulpit may have been in it, and so may the man that sweeps the streets. You can't tell about it; the fellers don't stand around and holler about it; but they're heroes just the same; the salt of the earth on this continent; and the world is better for 'em, a heap. They are self-reliant and self-respecting citizens, who help to keep the country sweet. And their children are proud of them. How proud! And they grow up all the stronger, and better citizens for this inheritance.

"Still, I believe in arbitration—on principle; and I feel bound to say that I believe in it in practise, too. War is a frightful waste of human life and of material. I can't now, and I never could, see the sense of destroying things; and I think the most tremendously foolish thing going is taxing people out of house and home to keep up great standing armies that are finally to be destroyed.

"And still I can't keep thinking that a war like ours, about a real principle, is not without its compensations. It sort of clears the atmosphere, distributes backbone around among survivors, and tends to the perpetuation and enlargement of freedom, and the benefit of the human race."